



# ***The Mandate (Quality of Writing)***



Department of the Army writing will be clear, concise, and effective. Army correspondence must aid effective and efficient communication and decision making.

**AR 25-50**



# ***Army Writing Standards***



- Effective Army writing:
  - transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading.
  - is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- Good Army writing:
  - is concise, organized, and right to the point.
  - meets two essential requirements.

**AR 25-50**



# ***Voice***



**Quoted from the *Gregg Reference Manual*,  
Ninth Edition:**

**VOICE - The property of the verb that indicates  
whether the subject acts or is acted upon.**

**ACTIVE VOICE - A verb is in the active voice  
its subject is the doer of the act.**

**PASSIVE VOICE - A verb is in the passive voice  
when its subject is acted upon.**



# ***Subject vs Doer***

***Doer of Action***



***Active*** Frankie shot Johnny.



***Subject of sentence.***

***Passive*** Johnny was shot by Frankie.



***Subject of sentence.***  
***action***



***Doer of***



# ***Active Emphasizes the Doer***



The adjutant assists the  
commander.

*subject*  
*action*

*verb*

*receiver of the*

*(doer)*



# ***Passive Emphasizes the Receiver***



The commander is assisted by the  
adjutant.  
*subject (receiver)*



# ***Examples***



PFC Thomas broke the window.

The window was broken by PFC Thomas.

The window was broken.



# ***Recognizing Passive Voice***



Use some form of the verb “to be”:

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

plus (+)

main verb form ending usually in “ed,” “en,” or “t”  
(past participle form)

Examples: were completed, is requested, was seen, are  
written, was sent





# ***Active or Passive?***



1. SGT Smith counseled PFC Johnson.
2. The SOP was written by the commander.
3. PVT Jones is being sent on sick call by SGT Baker.
4. SSG Green reenlisted and was given the day off by the commander.
5. SPC Johanson went before the promotion board.



# ***Specific Rules for Constructing Military Correspondence***



- **Use short words.**
- **Keep sentences short.**
- **Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are no more than 10 lines.**
- **Avoid jargon.**
- **Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of this office, this headquarters, etc.**
- **Avoid sentences that begin with “It is...,” “There is...,” or “There are....”**
- **Write one-page letters and memorandums for most correspondence.**
- **Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.**